



United States Embassy
Singapore

RELEASE

Public Affairs Section

<http://singapore.usembassy.gov>

27 Napier Road, Singapore 258508

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**NEW FEE FOR TRAVELERS TO THE UNITED STATES
UNDER VISA WAIVER PROGRAM FROM SEPTEMBER 8, 2010**

Starting September 8, 2010, all travelers to the United States, including Singaporeans, under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) must pay a fee when obtaining authorization through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA™) prior to initiating travel to the United States. ESTA™ is an automated system used to determine the eligibility of visitors to travel to the United States under the VWP. Eligible visitors should apply for travel authorization via the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) ESTA™ website at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>.

The US\$14 fee is mandated by U.S. law to cover the processing cost, which is fixed presently at US\$4 for the ESTA™ system, in addition to a mandatory US\$10 fee for successful ESTA™ authorizations. On applying for or renewing an ESTA™, travelers must make payment by credit card or debit card before the application can be accepted for processing. The ESTA™ system currently accepts only the following credit/debit cards: MasterCard, VISA, American Express and Discover. If your ESTA™ application is denied, you will only be charged the processing fee of US\$4. If you experience a problem with the ESTA registration or fee payment, you may contact the ESTA™ Customer Service Center at +1-703-526-4200 or +1-877-227-5511.

You may apply for ESTA™ at any time prior to travel and, once approved, ESTA™ applications are valid for multiple entries into the United States for up to two years or until your passport expires, whichever comes first. DHS recommends that ESTA™ applications be submitted as soon as you begin planning U.S.-bound travel, and not less than 72 hours prior to travel. If you do not have an approved ESTA™, you may be denied boarding, experience delayed processing, or be denied admission at a U.S. port of entry. If you have already applied for and received ESTA™ approval prior to September 8, you do not need to pay the ESTA™ fee or take any other action. If your name or passport number has changed since the initial ESTA™ approval, you must apply again and, as of September 8, you will be required to pay the ESTA™ fee.

You should be aware that unauthorized third-parties have established Web sites, including ones that specifically target Singaporeans, which charge high fees for bogus information about ESTA™ and for submitting ESTA™ applications to DHS on behalf of the traveler. These businesses and Web sites are not endorsed by, associated with, or affiliated in any way with DHS or the United States Government. Use of a private service to apply for travel authorization via ESTA™ will not expedite the granting of approval. More information about ESTA™ may be found at <http://www.cbp.gov/esta>. Additional visa and travel information is available on the Embassy website at <http://singapore.usembassy.gov/>.